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DRESS SWORD, FRENCH, XVIII CENTURY

# BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

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## CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN INDUSTRIAL ART, 1934

Following the general pattern of its important exhibition of 1929, the Museum will offer during November and December of this year a comprehensive display of contemporary American industrial art. This will be the thirteenth in the series of industrial art exhibitions and will mark the progress of design over a five-year period, notably in the field of home furnishings.

It will be recalled that the 1929 exhibition contained only specially designed material; such will also be the case this year. On the other hand, the twelfth exhibition, held in

1931, consisted only of items from actual stock in the open market and demonstrated how rapidly the general interest in contemporary design had spread, through the fact that though it contained only half as many objects as its predecessor, there were twice as many exhibitors; in other words, really a four-to-one ratio, a hopeful sign to those who follow trends of design and seek to find in them some response to the needs and desires of the day, namely, a contemporary art expression.

This year the Museum has again enlisted the aid of a Cooperating Committee, though its organization has taken quite a different form from that of 1929. According to the scheme of installation, the Gallery of Special Exhibitions will give the impression of three related galleries. The Museum has invited three architects, Paul Philippe Cret, Arthur Loomis Harmon, and Ely Jacques Kahn, to supervise the design of these major units. Each will undertake to harmonize and present as a general gallery project the work of several other cooperating designers.

Mr. Harmon's unit, the central section of the gallery, will consist of six complete interiors, each designed by an architect who will in turn marshal such other individuals and firms as may be necessary to realize his own part of the exhibition. The architects who have kindly agreed to assist in this unit are Archibald M. Brown, William E. Lescage, John W. Root, Eliel Saarinen, Eugene Schoen, and Ralph T. Walker.

Similarly Mr. Cret and Mr. Kahn will be assisted by groups of designers. In their units the presentation will not permit the installation of complete rooms; instead arrangements of parts of rooms and groupings of objects of industrial art, such as textiles, furniture, glass, pottery, etc., are planned for. Mr. Cret's collaborators to date include Gustav Jensen, Gilbert Rhode, Lee Simonson—who will have the collaboration of Raymond Loewy—Walter D. Teague, and V. F. von Lossberg; while Mr. Kahn will be assisted by Donald Deskey, Walter W. Kantack, Irvin L. Scott, and Walter von Nessen.

All these designers will be asked to recommend such other designers and makers of individual objects as may be necessary for the carrying out of their respective projects.

though, as is always the case, entries will be shown only by direct invitation from the Museum.

The exceptionally large attendance at the last exhibition of this type, over 186,000, may be regarded as an endorsement of this kind of display which encourages a hope that this year's effort may be similarly rewarded.

### THE JEAN JACQUES REUBELL BEQUEST

The late Jean Jacques Reubell, a citizen of France, was a distinguished collector. As he was a discriminating judge, he was constantly acquiring pieces of exceptional interest and value. After his death in 1933 his collection was dispersed at auction,<sup>1</sup> with the exception of a number of choice objects bequeathed to various museums—The Metropolitan Museum of Art, of which he was already a Benefactor, the Musée des Arts Décoratifs in Paris, of which he was an administrator, the Museum at Colmar, his native city, and the Instituto Valencia de Don Juan in Madrid. The objects received by this Museum comprise twenty-seven arms of excellent quality which, after their withdrawal from the current exhibition in the Room of Recent Accessions, will be shown in Gallery H 7 with the collection of European daggers and court and hunting swords which he generously presented to the Museum in 1926 in memory of his mother, Julia C. Coster, and of his wife, Adeline E. Post, both of New York City.<sup>2</sup>

Most of the bequeathed objects are French swords of the eighteenth century. They are a clear reminder of the extravagant social life of the period and the excitement which the nobles craved. To see how prevalent was the use of the sword we need only recall that at the end of the eighteenth century there were 241 master swordsmiths in Paris compared with 1824 master shoemakers. Swords such as ours testify that

unusual skill was required before one could enter into the promised land of a master-ship. The blades are of excellent quality. A well-known Parisian gunsmith told the writer that the blades of such swords are still sought after, to be broken down and used for awls because their metal is especially good for that purpose. Four of the blades are inscribed with the name of the city of their origin—Amsterdam, The Hague, Dijon, and Paris. One of the finest swords, with its guard, grip, and pommel of painted porcelain (illustrated on the front cover), is a weapon which emphasizes the refinement of



FIG. 1. GUARD OF FRENCH COURT SWORD, ABOUT 1775

contemporary costume. The silver hilts of two others bear the Paris hallmarks of 1758-1759 and of 1761-1762 respectively. Most of the hilts, however, are of steel chased in relief or pierced, their exquisite workmanship reflecting the sure yet delicate touch of the artist in manipulating so intractable a metal.

These hilts were chased after specially prepared designs, many of which have come down to us; in the Print Room of the Museum, for example, are designs made by Juste Aurèle Meissonnier for a sword presented to Louis XVI on the occasion of his marriage in 1725. The chasing of these hilts was in no sense a mechanical process. The work was done in relief, in the manner in which a medalist chisels the master matrices used to stamp the negative mold, or molds in the case of quantity production. As the medium in which our swords were executed was a difficult one, a high degree of skill was required not only to create the

<sup>1</sup> Five sales held at the Hôtel Drouot, Paris, 1933-1934.

<sup>2</sup> Bashford Dean, *Catalogue of European Daggers*; idem, *Catalogue of European Court Swords and Hunting Swords*.

design but also to interpret it. Results would have been poor if the chaser as well as the



FIG. 2. PAGE'S HUNTING SWORD, FRENCH  
XVIII CENTURY

designer had not been an artist. As a matter of fact the chaser often proved the greater master and in translating the design into

metal showed strong individuality. It is interesting to note in this connection that Benvenuto Cellini considered his work in metal superior to his study in wax.

One of our sword hilts, chased in high relief, represents in polished steel on a stippled gold ground spirited combats of mounted soldiers (fig. 1). The artist who executed it was probably a medalist, for we know that talented medalists were often commissioned to chase the hilts of court swords. For example, a sword exhibited in Gallery H 7, which commemorates the victorious conclusion of the Seven Years' War, is signed by the court medalist Anton Widemann. In the same gallery is a typical French dress sword, which was worn in America. It was presented by Congress in 1777 to Marinus Willett, Mayor of New York. The blade is inscribed: "Liger fourbisseur de S. A. Msgr. Le Duc de Chartre & Comte de Clermont Rue Coquillière à Paris."

The form of the court sword—hilt and blade—was ordinarily as stereotyped as was the cocked hat. However, there were exceptions. The hilt of the sword shown in figure 3, at the left, lacks the usual bilobate guard; here the knuckle bow joins the ring guard, a survival of an earlier form. The blade retains its original bluing and is ornamented with groups of fleurs-de-lis divided by laurel leaves arranged diagonally. It also bears arms which indicate that the sword belonged to a member of the royal house of France.<sup>3</sup> On each side of the blade near the hilt is the inscription: "Palle M<sup>d</sup> fourbisseur Place Des Trois Maries Prés Le Pont neuve à Paris" and on the scabbard chape "Palle Fourbisseur De Monsieur Frère Du Roy à Paris." Palle's dates and any other information concerning him would of course help to identify the princely owner of the sword, but such data are unavailable to the

<sup>3</sup> The arms of France engrafted gules (for Berry) surrounded by the collars of four knightly Orders (Saint Lazarus of Jerusalem and the Hospitalers of Our Lady of Mount Carmel, the Golden Fleece, Saint Michael, and the Holy Ghost), the whole superimposed upon an eight-pointed star (probably of a Chevalier Grand Croix of Saint Louis) reposing upon a mantling and flanked by laurel branches; the mantling reflexed above the arms is surmounted by a ducal crown fleurdelisé.

writer at the moment. Unfortunately no comprehensive biography of armorers has yet been published.

It was customary for the children of nobles to wear court swords, many of which were especially rich. Louis XIII of France

(fig. 2), are included in the Reubell bequest. These still hold a special charm for those who realize the thrill any boy experiences in merely handling such a sword, and they will remind the visitor of certain popular novels in which the hero vanquished every swords-

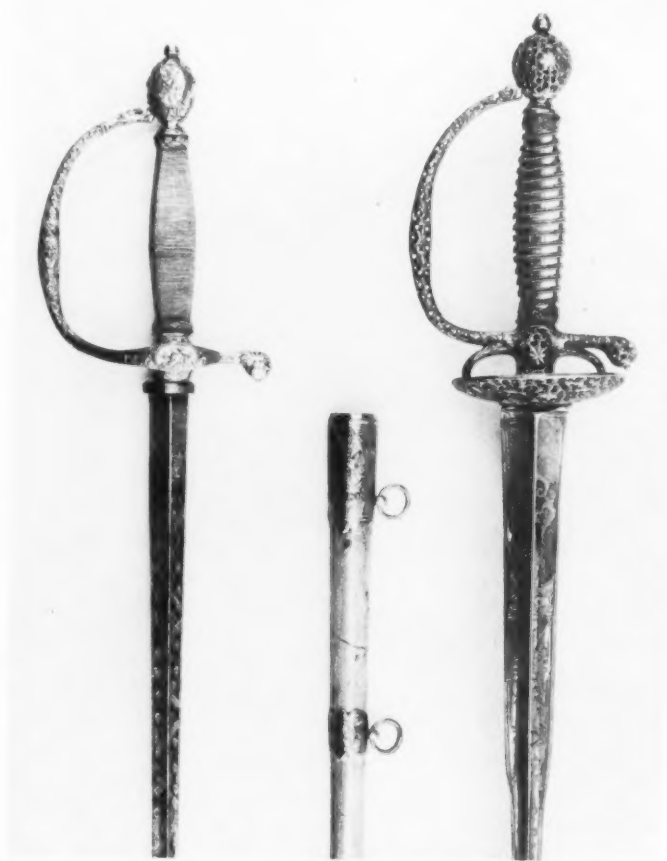


FIG. 3. COURT SWORD AND SCABBARD, FRENCH, XVIII CENTURY  
AND SWORD WITH COLICHEMARDE BLADE

was presented with a sword when he was but a year old. In the Archives Nationales, Paris, is the original design by the goldsmith Thomas Germain for a sword that he made at a cost of 6,472 livres for the Dauphin, son of Louis XV, when the boy was five years old. The sword of the Dauphin, son of Louis XVI, is today in the Invalides, Paris. No less than ten pages' swords, one of which is a hunting sword

man in sight. The smallest of these swords measures but twenty-three inches over all.

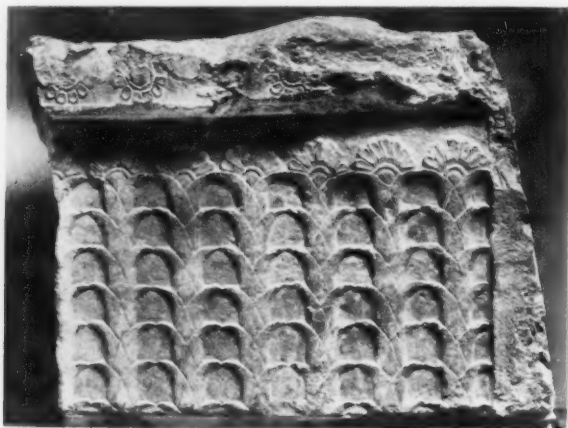
One of the unusual blades is a typical colichemarde (fig. 3, right); the word is a corruption of Königsmark, the name of the famous military leader supposed to have invented this form of blade. The characteristics are the triangular section with each face hollowed and the abrupt taper about one quarter of the distance from hilt to



point. The invention of this shape of blade made the dexterous handling of the sword an accomplishment more readily attainable. In the hands of a fencer it has a spontaneous vitality. A sword with a blade of this type is not much heavier than a lady's fan, but despite this fact was extremely effective. Contemporary memoirs teach us, however, that, wicked as such weapons were, infinitely more harm was done by the tongue than by the sword.

STEPHEN V. GRANCAY.

The relief is decorated with a row of stylized palmette trees and a band of rosettes, motives familiar to us from monuments of the Achaemenian period at Persepolis and Susa. Each tree consists of a series of calyxes surmounted by a palmette suggesting the foliage of the date palm. Palmette trees occur frequently in Assyrian and Babylonian art, being derived from the Tree of Life, or sacred tree, which played such an important part in the religion of the



RELIEF, PERSIAN, V-IV CENTURY B.C.

### AN ACHAEMENIAN ALABASTER RELIEF

The Museum's Persian Expedition, excavating last season at Ķasr-i-Abu Našr, near Shiraz,<sup>1</sup> yielded a number of interesting objects of the Achaemenian, Sasanian, and Muhammadan periods, the most important being an Achaemenian alabaster relief<sup>2</sup> related in style to sculptures at Persepolis and Susa.<sup>3</sup> The first specimen of Persian sculpture of the Achaemenian period to be included in the Museum's collection of ancient Oriental art, it is shown this month in the Room of Recent Accessions.

<sup>1</sup> For a report upon these excavations see Walter Hauser, *BULLETIN*, Sect. II of Nov., 1933, pp. 39-44.

<sup>2</sup> Acc. no. 34.90.1. Rogers Fund, 1933.

<sup>3</sup> Friedrich Sarre, *Die Kunst des alten Persiens*, figs. 4-20. Persepolis is at present being reconstructed by the Chicago Oriental Institute under the direction of Professor Ernst Herzfeld.

Near East. In transforming the date palm into a symbol, Mesopotamian artists created an almost abstract motive bearing only slight resemblance to a real tree. When the Persians adopted this Mesopotamian Tree of Life with its palmette devices they modified it and thus developed a new motive.

Our relief must have come from an Achaemenian building—perhaps in the vicinity of Ķasr-i-Abu Našr, perhaps from Persepolis itself (whence it may have been brought to the site of its excavation). It was probably part of a monumental stairway like those of the palaces of the Persian kings Darius (521-485 B. C.) and Xerxes (485-465 B. C.) at Persepolis.<sup>4</sup> The stairway in front of the Audience Hall and that leading to the smaller palaces show several panels with palmette trees identical to those

<sup>4</sup> *Illustrated London News*, Feb. 11, 1933, p. 207, Mar. 25, pp. 401-406.

on our relief. There, however, the trees vary in height, the number of calyxes being increased or diminished according to the space available. Palmette trees were also used as decorative motives in Achaemenian reliefs of enameled brick. On the high frieze under the crenelations of the palace walls at Persepolis<sup>3</sup> and on the great staircase at Susa, for example, an effective design, enhanced by polychromy, is formed by palmette trees. They are arranged in a continuous row, following the stylistic principle of rhythmic composition favored by Achaemenian sculptors. This principle of composition, which was also applied to reliefs with figure subjects, emphasizes the monumentality and the ceremonial spirit of the Achaemenian era of Persian art.

M. S. DIMAND.

### A PAINTING BY JUSEPE RIBERA

In purchasing the large painting of the Holy Family with Saint Catherine by Ribera the Museum decisively strengthens its representation of baroque painting.<sup>1</sup> This is the only work by Ribera in the Museum collection, for the Lucretia formerly assigned to him is no longer believed to be by him.

The Holy Family with Saint Catherine is an example of Ribera's painting which may well gratify the art lover; it may, moreover, surprise him if he is one of those who are somewhat familiar with Ribera's work without knowing it really well. The surprise would be due to the fact that the name of Ribera is usually associated either with paintings of half-naked old saints and hermits mortifying their dessicated bodies or with unforgettably real pictures of martyrdoms in all their shocking technical detail.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., Apr. 8, 1933, p. 488.

<sup>1</sup> The painting is now on view in the Room of Recent Accessions. Oil on canvas; h. 82½, w. 60¾ in. Signed: Jusepe de Ribera español / Academico Ro<sup>no</sup> / F. 164(87). The last figure is indistinct. Most writers on Ribera have read it 3, but it looks more like a 7 which the artist has converted into an 8. This would date the completion of our painting two years earlier than the Adoration of the Shepherds in the Louvre.

Such cruel representations as these were in vociferous demand in Ribera's day. The foremost Italian painters with few exceptions were supplying striking representations of such subjects, and Ribera for his part played his variations upon these formidable themes with such brilliant success that we find today in the world's public and private picture galleries not only Ribera's many surviving originals but also old copies and imitations without number.

The Holy Family with Saint Catherine belongs to a different category of Ribera's work, a category far less numerous and, to the quieter taste of today, far more pleasing. Among the finest of his works in this lovelier vein are the noble Lamentation (1637) in the Monastery of San Martino, the Holy Family in the Carpenter Shop (1639) in Wiesbaden, the Saint Agnes (1641) in Dresden, and the famous Adoration of the Shepherds (1650) in the Louvre. Into the creation of such ingratiating works as these have gone many of the qualities which excited great enthusiasm when they appeared in the crueler subjects. Here is found the same technical splendor (the famous Neapolitan *brío*), but appropriately subdued to suit the gentler themes. Again as in the martyrdoms the learned and powerful rendition of forms is accentuated by the raking Caravaggiesque illumination. The dependably solid textures are again expressed by means of an impasto vigorous and sure, yet free from coarseness or bombast.

Especially notable is the vibrant mastery of early baroque composition. In the preceding century Raphael had bathed his Holy Family (now in the Pinakothek, Munich) in a benign diffused radiance and had composed the group as a pyramid resting stably on its base. Ribera's Holy Family with Saint Catherine, on the contrary, is like a cone of light expanding upward from a point of greatest intensity, located in the white cloth on which the Child sits supported by His mother's hand. The spectator's eye is carried upward alternately to right and left, where it finds the sturdy body of the little boy, the devoted head of the fair Saint Catherine, the wide-eyed young mother. Above and beyond are seen

the old people, Joseph and Anne, revealed by a concentrated but dim light which by its low intensity subordinates them and seems to push them into a more distant plane as though by a sort of luminary perspective. It is in the lower portion of the picture, away from the cone of light, that most of the color is found. The Virgin's dress is ruby red and her mantle a fine clear blue; Saint Catherine wears a cloak of golden brown damask.

In his general style Ribera is neither distinctly Spanish nor unmistakably Neapolitan, and future years will probably find the Museum's Holy Family alternating between the galleries devoted to these two national schools. In the history of Italian painting our artist is the acknowledged leader of the painters of his generation in Naples, the most gifted among the followers of Caravaggio's example. His worthiest contemporaries, the somewhat undervalued painters Massimo Stanzione and Caracciolo (called Battistello), adhered to styles which, like Ribera's, remained simple, legible, and naturalistic as compared with the agitated and flashy high baroque works of Pietro da Cortona and Mattia Preti in the second half of the century. Of the earlier great styles there is little discoverable trace in Ribera's work. Gone are Correggio's melted outlines, Michelangelo's heroic *contrapposto*, Tintoretto's romantic frenzy, Barocci's manneristic elegance, and even the newer classicism of the Carracci. Caravaggio, who had died before the supposed date of Ribera's arrival in Italy, certainly before his coming to Naples, is the one clear stylistic influence.

The early works of Ribera have perished or remain unidentified, and it is difficult to determine just how much he may have learned in Valencia from his master Francisco Ribalta, whose own somewhat clumsy style must have owed much to his prolonged studies in Italy. Recent research has set February 17, 1591, as the date of Ribera's baptism.<sup>2</sup> Thus he was three years younger at the time of his departure from

Spain than formerly was supposed. He can hardly have been older than twenty years when he reached Italy, and he never again left that country. He seems to have begun his sojourn with a stay in Parma, and seventeenth-century travelers are said to have mistaken his work in the little chapel of Santa Maria Bianca de PP. Scalzi, Parma, for that of Correggio.<sup>3</sup> In 1615 he moved to Naples, where the remainder of his life was spent. A year after his arrival he was married to a Neapolitan girl, the daughter of an artist. Almost from the beginning he was sponsored by his fellow countryman the Duke of Osuna, then Viceroy of Naples. He received liberal commissions for his work and moved in the distinguished society of the viceregal court under the patronage of successive Spanish rulers. Ten years after he had come to Naples he told the painter Martinez<sup>4</sup> that he intended never returning to Spain, that he who is well placed doesn't budge, and that while Spain might be a tender mother to strangers she was a cruel stepmother to her own children.

Italy meanwhile continued to heap honors upon "the little Spaniard." In 1626 he could sign himself *Accademico Romano*. Twenty years later he was decorated by the Pope. In seventeenth-century Naples the finest efforts of the painters were devoted to the embellishment of the Monastery of San Martino, perched on the rock above the city. Here in 1622 Caracciolo had painted his beautiful picture of Christ Washing the Feet of Saint Peter, and here in 1637 Ribera painted the Lamentation, perhaps his noblest work. Near the end of his life he painted here another of his most impressive pictures, the Communion of the Apostles. In 1646 he had been chosen over all his Italian rivals to paint the altarpiece for the Cappella del Tesoro in the Cathedral.

And yet, despite his unquestioned success, despite all the pervading cultural influences in the land of his adoption, Ribera must always have remained acutely conscious of his Spanishness. Popularly he was

<sup>2</sup> Entry in the baptismal records of the collegiate church at Játiva, published by G. I. Viñes, *Archivo de arte valenciano*, vol. IX (1923), p. 19.

<sup>3</sup> Luigi Scaramuccia, *Le Finezze de pennelli italiani* . . . p. 174. Pavia, 1674.

<sup>4</sup> Jusepe Martinez, *Discursos practicables del nobilísimo arte de la pintura*, p. 34. Madrid, 1806.



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HOLY FAMILY WITH SAINT CATHERINE BY JUSEPE RIBERA

known as *Lo Spagnoletto*, and often after he signed his name to his paintings he would add *español* or *español valenciano*, and once in a mood of homesickness for the village of his birth he added after his name the words *español valenciano de la ciudad de Xativa*.<sup>5</sup> Spaniards traveling in Italy made a point of presenting themselves to their celebrated compatriot. Velazquez must have seen him during his visit in 1629. Twenty years later, when Philip IV sent him to Italy again, this time primarily to buy paintings for the royal collection, Velazquez seems to have included among his purchases many of Ribera's works. The inventory of Philip's paintings after his death listed very few Spanish pictures other than those of Velazquez and Ribera. No examples whatever by Zurbaran or Murillo were included, but by Ribera there were thirty-six, of which number five hung in Philip's own bedroom.<sup>6</sup>

The enthusiasm of Velazquez and Philip IV for Ribera's work seems to have been generally shared by the Spaniards, for fully half the works of the great expatriate have gradually found their way back to the land of his birth. There remained something inalienably Spanish in his psychology, which the Spaniards themselves could recognize. He had never been able to share the passion of the Italian painters for ideal beauty. Something in his blood, or in his early experiences, must be held accountable for his unaffected interest in simple, natural humanity, for his keen, disinterested observation, neither sentimental nor sadistic. His is a true democracy, which declares that the holy people of the Scriptures were everyday folk, and that among everyday folk can be found dignity and sweetness and beauty.

In the Museum's Holy Family with Saint Catherine, in any case, Ribera has chosen simple types for the telling of a peaceful, homely story. It is not without significance that he has omitted the ring which would have constituted the scene a

mystic marriage. Saint Catherine's gesture is one of tenderest devotion. What lovely expressive hands she has, and what a touching inclination of the head! The other personages seem passive by comparison. The holy child is a normal, friendly baby, Saint Anne a typical fond old grandmother, too shy in the presence of the lady guest to press the offer of her rose. Joseph is an austere peasant, a remembered Spaniard one would guess, a man of few words, as he should be. As for the Virgin, she is a sweet, pretty, absent-minded girl such as Ribera might well have expected to see in Naples a dozen times in a day, waiting on customers in the little shops or doing the marketing for the mistress's dinner.

The history of the picture has been traced back only a century and a quarter. It was bought in Italy about 1807 or 1808 by Jean Baptiste Pierre Lebrun, painter, author, and art dealer, well known also as the husband of the portraitist Mlle Vigée. In 1810 Lebrun took the picture, together with many others, to Paris for sale, and it was engraved for his illustrated catalogue.<sup>7</sup> The times being unpropitious for selling, a number of the pictures were consigned to a London dealer. W. Buchanan,<sup>8</sup> writing a few years later about English collections, describes our painting as follows: "No. 128. Ribera—called Spagnolett—A large picture of the Holy Family, in which a female is kissing the hand of the infant. This picture is certainly the finest of this master in England, and will rank with any of his works. It is clear and brilliant in tone, and the characters are all graceful and appropriate. It was formerly at Genoa, and is now in the possession of Sir Thomas Baring." The picture remained for a century in the possession of the Baring family, belonging finally to the first and second Earls of Northbrook. More recently it was in the collection of Henry George Charles Lascelles, Earl of Harewood, the son-in-law of King George.

HARRY B. WEHLE.

<sup>5</sup> On the Adoration of the Shepherds, painted in 1640, now in the Escorial.

<sup>6</sup> Carl Justi, *Velazquez und sein Jahrhundert*, p. 323.

<sup>7</sup> *Recueil de gravures au trait* . . . , vol. II, p. 17, pl. 12.

<sup>8</sup> *Memories of Painting*, vol. II, pp. 251 ff.

A LOAN COLLECTION OF  
EARLY CHINESE BRONZES

The loan of forty-two early Chinese bronzes from the collection of Mrs. Christian R. Holmes is a notable event on the Museum's summer calendar. As announced in the June issue of the BULLETIN, the bronzes are on exhibition in Cases L and M of Gal-

It is obvious that we cannot here present much more than a few guide posts to the bronzes in Mrs. Holmes's collection, which includes a number of fine pieces known to Far Eastern scholars throughout the world and published in several recent works on early Chinese bronzes by recognized authorities.<sup>1</sup>

The term "early Chinese bronzes" com-



FIG. 1. CHÊNG (BELL), CHINESE, CHOU DYNASTY

lery E 10, where they are to remain until late autumn. It seems hardly necessary to point out that this presents a rare opportunity to students and to the public at large. However generous they may be, private collectors cannot make their collections available to many besides friends and qualified scholars. It is therefore extremely gratifying to the Museum to be able to place these rare and beautiful objects before a public which might not otherwise have an opportunity of seeing them. In addition, the more serious observer is permitted to compare the various pieces with others of the same type in the Museum collection.

monly refers to two, or perhaps we should say three, distinct types or groups: the ceremonial vessels from prehistoric times through the Han dynasty and the mirrors and the small gilt-bronze Buddhistic figures from the Ch'in dynasty through the Sung. Until recently bronzes earlier than Han were commonly called Chou, but they are now more often roughly classed as of the Three Dynasties (Hsia, 2205-1766 B. C., Shang,

<sup>1</sup> Oswald Sirén, *Chinese Sculpture from the Fifth to the Fourteenth Century*, London, 1925; Sueji Umehara, *Shino-Kodo Seikwa (Selected Relics of Ancient Chinese Bronzes from Collections in Europe and America)*, Osaka, 1933.

1706-1122 B.C., and Chou, 1122-256 B.C.), since a good deal of evidence is accumulating which may eventually permit earlier and more accurate dates for them. It has been necessary to be conservative about these, the only survivals of Chinese civilization from earliest times, because our information about them has been so meager. The inscriptions not infrequently found on vessels of this type are in archaic characters which often defy accurate translation, and the written records of the laws governing the making of the vessels are either missing or are vague theoretical statements by writers of later periods. Consequently, a great deal of confusion has prevailed not only about the dating but also about the classification of the vessels. The original confusion was undoubtedly due to the failure of scholars under the Hans to recognize synonymous terms and to grasp the significance of certain characters. In the Hsüan Ho Po Ku T'u Lu (Illustrated Catalogue of Ancient Bronze Vessels in the Hsüan Ho), compiled in the twelfth century A.D., we find the statement: "Vessels of the Three Dynasties suffered at the extinction of culture under the Ch'in, when civilized institutions were utterly swept away. Scholars of later times, who knew the names but not the actual vessels, let speculation take the place of reality. Errors begat errors, and each through reiteration gained strength so that it came to be regarded as an unassailable truth."<sup>2</sup> Nor can we blame the confusion entirely on the Chinese. Western scholars have continued to make positive statements based on these misty records without bothering to check even those points which might have been cleared up.

The chief ceremonial vessels may be grouped under about twenty-five heads, the names indicating the use to which each was put. Many writers still use far more, but with so little distinction between the types that many of the terms are superfluous. Mr. Yelts has some very sound ideas about simplifying the classifications and clearing up misnomers, and it is to be hoped that other scholars will follow his lead. We cannot here go into a discussion of all these types of

<sup>2</sup> Quoted by W. Perceval Yetts, *The George Eumorfopoulos Collection*, vol. 1, p. 41.

ceremonial vessels, but when specific examples in this collection are mentioned, a little information about the ceremonial function of each is given.

The prehistoric or pre-Han group includes twenty-two pieces, of which sixteen are called Chou and six are ascribed to the short Ch'in period (256-206 B.C.) which intervenes between the Chou and the Han dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220). We find at least nine different types of vessels in the Chou group. As is almost invariably the case with Chou bronzes, on most of the sixteen pieces the prevailing motives are the *lei wên*, the rain or thundercloud pattern, which is usually executed in the form of meander-like spirals, and the grotesque *t'ao t'ieh*, a mask-like motive which has never been adequately interpreted but which was certainly intended to inspire awe in the beholder.

In this group, we mention especially only the massive *chêng*, or musical bell,<sup>3</sup> illustrated in figure 1, and a *ku*, or wine vase.<sup>4</sup> As the Classics reveal clearly that bells of various types adapted to specific purposes played a part in ritual ceremonies under the Chou, we may properly include them in a discussion of ceremonial bronzes. The type shown here appears to have been sounded to regulate the time of the drums in sacrificial rites and to assist in signaling the movements of the army on the march. According to the Shuo wên (a dictionary compiled by Hsü Shên in the second century A.D.), the *ku* is a goblet for drinking wine at certain festivals; its capacity is given in the Chou li as three pints, but the specifications of vessels found in such works frequently do not tally with the vessels as we know them. The *ku* selected for mention is of interest both for its graceful shape and for the remarkable jadelike quality of the bronze.

The Ch'in dynasty pieces are a little less troublesome than those of the Chou, although trustworthy standards for dating are still all too few. Of the three mirrors from this period, two<sup>5</sup> are of the same general design as one in the Museum collection.<sup>6</sup>

<sup>3</sup> L. 3254.14. Shown in Case M.

<sup>4</sup> L. 3254.13. Shown in Case M. This is a type frequently called *tsun*; our use of the term *ku* is in accordance with the classification by Yetts.

<sup>5</sup> L. 3254.41, 42. Shown in Case M.

<sup>6</sup> Acc. no. 32.165. Exhibited in Case A.

and this design we do not find in any other period of Chinese art. In contrast with the heavily decorated Chou bronzes, these mirrors are entirely plain except for a starlike design that some interpret as representing the sun's rays. It seems probable from the profusion of mirrors which have been preserved through the ages in China that they were designed to be used not only for practical toilet purposes but as talismans as well, to avert disaster or bring good fortune.

A large *lien*, or toilet case,<sup>7</sup> of the Han dynasty presents an example in which a white metal alloy was evidently used in greater proportion than was customary, giving a silvery appearance to the bronze. The body of the *lien* is undecorated except for animal feet and an encircling band in the center. The cover is ornamented with three reclining rams and a design of incised animals in the center.

Another striking Han piece is a gilt-bronze bowl with cover.<sup>8</sup> The three legs represent crouching animals, which support the vessel on their backs, and the cover is decorated with three stylized bird ornaments. The circular jointed aspect of the body of this bowl is purely Han. An interesting parallel may be seen in some of the boxes of dried lacquer and gilt-bronze of the same period.

In the rather confused and confusing Six Dynasties, the Northern Wei (A. D. 386-557) covered all but thirty-two of the two hundred and three years and is the only one which left its individual stamp on Chinese art. It is here that we get our first Buddhist sculpture in the round. Aside from the

large stone figures and stelae, however, there is little left of Wei art except some tomb pottery and a few small gilt-bronze pieces. The Holmes Collection contains four pieces of this period: a gilt-bronze incense burner with cover which has a vivid green and blue patina, an enchanting gilt-bronze tiger in a reclining position, a seated figure of Buddha of the same material, and a bronze incense burner in an extraordinary woven-basket pattern, the top decorated with a lively bird flanked by four smaller birds.<sup>9</sup>

The four pieces of the Sui dynasty (A. D. 589-618) are all worthy of special mention. A mirror<sup>10</sup> with a painted floral design in green and red is one of the few of this type in existence. As in the Han toilet box, the bronze here has a large white-metal content and the mirror might almost be mistaken for silver. The three gilt-bronzes of this period<sup>11</sup> all bear

inscriptions and dates. We give here only the dates: the representation of Prabhūtaratna and Śākyamuni Expounding the Law has a date concurring with November 28, 609; Kuan Yin with two attendant Bodhisattvas, March 24, 611; and Kuan Yin with two attendants, November 2, 590. These little gilt-bronze figures are a delight to the eye, and it is superfluous to add that the inscriptions (on the backs) increase their charm for any collector.

We come finally to the T'ang group (A. D. 618-906). Here, as in the Sui group, we have four pieces, each of which deserves more space than we can give it. A gilt-



FIG. 2. MIRROR, CHINESE, T'ANG DYNASTY

<sup>9</sup> L. 3254.33A, B.; L. 3254.30; L. 3254.22; L. 3254.7. Shown in Case L.

<sup>10</sup> L. 3254.40. Shown in Case M.

<sup>11</sup> L. 3254.24, 28, 32. Shown in Case L.

<sup>7</sup> L. 3254.1 A, B. Shown in Case L.

<sup>8</sup> L. 3254.23 A, B. Shown in Case L.



bronze seated figure of Buddha, his hands in the teaching *mudra*, is larger than most of the T'ang bronzes of this type, and the little armored figure is unusual to the point of suggesting a strong Korean influence.<sup>12</sup> The outstanding T'ang pieces, however, are two mirrors, and these are among the best bronzes in the whole collection. The larger one,<sup>13</sup> illustrated in figure 2, has a silver surface, with a design of peony scrolls, two phoenixes, a winged horse, and a winged lion embossed in silver-gilt. The mirror is a justly famous one from the standpoint of conception, technique, and pure artistry. The second mirror,<sup>14</sup> although unfortunately not so well preserved as the first, is no less remarkable. Here the shape is square, the bronze covered with a lacquer surface. The design of birds, insects, and flowers is inlaid in gold and the four majestic phoenixes in the corners are of silver. The design here is marked with delicacy, forming a nice contrast with the bold, striking pattern of the larger mirror. In addition to holding an enviable place in the Holmes collection of bronzes, these two pieces stand in a unique position among the surviving mirrors of China.

PAULINE SIMMONS.

### A GREEK TERRACOTTA STATUETTE

Out of the ruck of terracotta statuettes, which were in antiquity the gifts of ordinary people to their gods, emerge some of fine sculptural quality. The Museum has

<sup>12</sup> L.3254.29 and L.3254.27. Shown in Case L.

<sup>13</sup> L.3254.37. Shown in Case L.

<sup>14</sup> L.3254.39. Shown in Case M.

recently acquired such a statuette,<sup>1</sup> a seated goddess of the late sixth century B.C., said to be from western Sicily, "probably Selinus."

The scale is fairly large.<sup>2</sup> The goddess sits in quiet majesty on a throne with her open hands upon her knees, her feet, in red shoes, on a footstool. She wears a stephane, over which her mantle is drawn like a veil, falling on her shoulders and down her legs in two orderly stacks of folds. The face is crisply modeled, with long oblique eyes, ridges at the brows, full lips, and delicate rounded chin. Abundant traces of red paint are preserved on mantle, stephane, irises, lips, shoes, throne, footstool. The left forearm and hand are restored, as are fragments of the torso and knee.

A seated goddess of the same type was found during the excavation of a great Sicilian sanctuary,<sup>3</sup> when terracottas came to light in great numbers and variety, enabling us to picture anew the multifarious life of such a religious center, with its votive gifts from believers rich and poor. Other terracottas of the same type have been found in widely separated localities and their manufacture has been assigned to Ionia. This newly acquired one will take its place with the standing Aphrodite (?), also from western Sicily, which came into the collection a few years ago.<sup>4</sup>

CHRISTINE ALEXANDER.

<sup>1</sup> Acc. no. 34.11.1. Shown this month in the Room of Recent Accessions.

<sup>2</sup> Height 7 in. (17.8 cm.).

<sup>3</sup> E. Gábrici, *Il Santuario della Malophoros a Selinunte*, *Monumenti dei Lincei*, vol. XXXII (1928), p. 213, pl. XXXIX, 1.

<sup>4</sup> BULLETIN, vol. XXV (1930), pp. 242 ff.



TERRACOTTA STATUETTE  
LATE VI CENTURY B.C.

## NOTES

**THE DIRECTOR HONORED BY PRINCETON.** At the commencement exercises held on June 19 Princeton University conferred the honorary degree of Doctor of Letters on the Director, Herbert Eustis Winlock.

**MEMBERSHIP.** At a meeting of the Board of Trustees, held June 20, 1934, Robert Graham Dun Douglas, having qualified, was elected a FELLOW IN PERPETUITY, in succession to Robert G. Dun. Five ANNUAL MEMBERS were elected.

**RADIO TALKS.** At 3:30 p.m. on the following Tuesdays, July 10, 17, 24, 31, and August 7, radio talks will be given over

WEAF by Huger Elliott, Director of Educational Work. These will deal with the development of painting during the last one hundred and fifty years.

**THE AMERICAN INSTITUTE OF DECORATORS** held several of the meetings of its annual convention in the Museum on June 18 and 19. The sessions included a demonstration talk by Grace Cornell on Color Facts, illustrated by objects from the collections. This was followed by three gallery talks: the American Wing, by Marion E. Miller; Renaissance art (the Morgan Wing), by Edith R. Abbot; and the textile collections, by Ethelwyn Bradish.

## LIST OF ACCESSIONS AND LOANS

### BY DEPARTMENTS

MAY 6 TO JUNE 5, 1934

#### NEAR EASTERN

Ceramics, Persian, *Purchase* (1).  
Miniatures and Manuscripts, Persian, *Purchase* (1).

#### FAR EASTERN

Costumes, Chinese, *Gift of Mrs. Edward A. Nis* (5).  
Metalwork, Chinese, *Loan of Mrs. Christian R. Holmes* (42).

#### RENAISSANCE AND MODERN

Ceramics, Spanish, *Loan of Anonymous Lender* (1).  
Costumes, English, *Loan of J. Templeman Coolidge* (2).  
Medals, Plaques, Etc., American, *Gifts of Mrs. Robert W. de Forest* (1), *Society of Medalists* (2).  
Musical Instruments, Italian, *Bequest of Annie Bolton Matthews Bryant* (2).

#### AMERICAN WING

Ceramics, *Purchases* (2).  
Glass, *Gift of Mrs. Marshall P. Slade* (2); *Purchases* (4).  
Medals, Plaques, Etc., *Gift of Mrs. Robert W. de Forest* (1).  
Metalwork, *Loan of George L. de Peyster* (1).  
Woodwork and Furniture, *Gift of Mrs. Joseph Tuckerman Tower* (1).

#### PAINTINGS

Drawings, American, *Gift of Spencer Bickerton* (1).  
Paintings, American, Dutch, Italian, Spanish, *Bequest of Mariana Griswold Van Rensselaer* (2); *Purchase* (1); *Loan of Mrs. Richard H. Dana* (1).

#### PRINTS

*Gifts of Winslow Ames* (4), *Anonymous Donor* (2), *Henry W. Kent* (2), *Mrs. Bella C. Landauer* (8), *Albert E. McVilly* (1), *Elizabeth Norton* (3), *W. G. Reindel* (3).

#### ARMS AND ARMOR

French, German, *Gift of George D. Pratt* (1); *Purchase* (1).

#### THE LIBRARY

Books, *Gifts of V. Alvin-Beaumont* (2), *Edward S. Harkness* (3), *Preston Harrison* (1), *Harvard Yenching Institute* (2), *Miss Hazel Gertrude Kinseella* (1), *Mrs. Caroline Ransom Williams* (1), *Sadajiro Yamanaka* (2).  
Photographs, *Gifts of Mrs. Ethel Blanchard Collier* (4), *Marquis de la Coste-Messelière* (3), *Mr. and Mrs. Eliel Saarinen* (12), *Eugene Schoen* (14).  
Lending Material, *Gift of Mrs. Ethel Blanchard Collier* (2).

# BULLETIN OF THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

## THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

Incorporated April 13, 1870, "for the purpose of establishing and maintaining . . . a Museum and library of art, of encouraging and developing the study of the fine arts, and the application of arts to manufacture and practical life, of advancing the general knowledge of kindred subjects, and, to that end, of furnishing popular instruction."

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**BRANCH BUILDING.** The Cloisters. 608 Fort Washington Avenue. Fifth Avenue Bus 4 (Northern Avenue) passes the entrance. Also reached by the Eighth Avenue subway, Washington Heights branch, to 100th Street-Overlook Terrace station. Take elevator to Fort Washington Avenue exit and walk south.

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The services of the Museum Instructors free.

An invitation to any general reception given by the Trustees at the Museum for Members.

The BULLETIN and the Annual Report.

A set of all handbooks published for general distribution, upon request at the Museum.

Contributing, Fellowship, and Sustaining Members have, upon request, double the number of tickets to the Museum accorded to Annual Members; their families are included in the invitation to any general reception, and whenever their subscriptions in the aggregate amount to \$1,000 they shall be entitled to be elected Fellows for Life and to become members of the Corporation. For further particulars, address the Secretary.

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MUSEUM GALLERIES and THE CLOISTERS free except on Mondays and Fridays, when a fee of 25 cents is charged to all except Members and those holding special cards—students, teachers and pupils in the New York City public schools, and others. Free on legal holidays. Children under seven at the main building and under twelve at The Cloisters must be accompanied by an adult.

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MAIN BUILDING and THE CLOISTERS:	
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Thanksgiving	10 a. m. to 5 p. m.
Christmas	1 p. m. to 5 p. m.
The American Wing & The Cloisters close at dusk in winter	
CAFETERIA:	
Saturdays	12 m. to 5:15 p. m.
Sundays	Closed.
Other days	12 m. to 4:45 p. m.
Holidays, except Thanksgiving & Christmas	12 m. to 5:15 p. m.
Thanksgiving	12 m. to 4:45 p. m.
Christmas	Closed.

LIBRARY: 10 a. m. to 5 p. m., except Sundays and holidays. MUSEUM EXTENSION OFFICE: 10 a. m. to 5 p. m., except Sundays and holidays.

PRINT ROOM and TEXTILE STUDY ROOM: Gallery hours, except Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and holidays.

### INSTRUCTORS

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Requests for permits to copy and to photograph should be addressed to the Secretary. No permits are necessary for sketching and for taking snapshots with hand cameras. Permits are issued for all days except Saturday afternoons, Sundays, and legal holidays. See special leaflet.

### INFORMATION AND SALES DESK

At the 82d Street entrance to the main building. Questions answered; fees received; classes and lectures, copying, sketching, and guidance arranged for; and directions given.

The Museum handbooks, colorprints, photographs, and postcards are sold here. See special leaflets.

### CAFETERIA

In the basement of the main building. Open for luncheon and afternoon tea daily, except Sundays and Christmas. Special groups and schools bringing lunches accommodated if notification is given in advance.

### TELEPHONES

The Museum number is Rhinelander 4-7600; The Cloisters branch of the Museum, Washington Heights 7-2733.